

EMPLOYERS GET GOLD FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE ARMED FORCES

Twenty-two employers from all parts of Great Britain have struck Gold in this year's Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), Defence Secretary, Michael Fallon, announced today.

The Scheme is designed to recognise and thank employers who are supporting Armed Forces personnel and their families. Examples of the support being provided by this year's winners include offering employment opportunities to veterans, helping Reservist employees to complete their military training and ensuring that Service personnel and their families are treated fairly.

This year's winners include large and small organisations from across the country, representing the public and private sectors, selected through a rigorous boarding process. The awards go to:

AECOM, Atos UK Ltd, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Boeing Defence UK Ltd, Bureau Veritas, DJ Rees Decorating Services Limited, Doncaster Council, Dundee City Council, Hampshire County Council, HSBC, Kier Group, KPMG, Nationwide Building Society, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Pertemps, QinetiQ, RBS Plc, Scottish Ambulance Service, Surrey County Council, TA Plastic Supplies Ltd, United Utilities and Waves Training Solutions Ltd.

Congratulating the winners, Mr Fallon said:

"Every year the level of support from companies across Britain for the armed forces continues to grow. This commitment is making a real difference to everyone who serves and their families – whether giving Reservists more time to train or supporting veterans or spouses, they embody what the Armed Forces Covenant is about".

To qualify for a Gold Award, employers must not only pledge their support but become advocates, encouraging others to do likewise.

DJ Rees, a small decorating company based in Merthyr Tydfil, has worked with Reservists and the Reserves in Wales for a number of years.

Welcoming the award, Managing Director, Mr David Rees said:

"We were tremendously happy just to be nominated for a Gold Award, let alone to actually win one. It's such an achievement, and I'm so happy. This is our 25th year of trading and winning this award has to be one of my proudest moments in business.

"As an employer I believe in supporting the Armed Forces. It's important to be flexible and understanding with my staff who are committed to their service. It's a priority to me and will continue to be so in the future."

Another winner, Kier Group, were instrumental in the development of the pilot for the Armed Forces Employability Pathway (AFEP) that aims to get the long term unemployed into work. Chief Executive, Mr Haydn Mursell, added:

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“We are very proud to have been awarded ERS Gold, which really underlines our commitment to working with the Armed Forces. As a national business with close regional links, we’re well-placed to advocate the benefits of Reservists and service leavers – a technically skilled, motivated workforce – around the country, and are keen to maintain our support for Defence personnel and their families.

“Our people are at the heart of everything we do, and by bringing this motivated, driven pool of talent into our business, we all benefit.”

Notes to Editors

1. The Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) was launched in 2014 by the Prime Minister to recognise employer support for the wider principles of the Defence Armed Forces Covenant and the full spectrum of Defence personnel. This includes the Reserves, Service Leavers, Wounded Injured and Sick, Cadets, and spouses.
2. The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise between the nation, government and the Armed Forces to treat our serving personnel, veterans and their families with fairness and respect. Corporates, charities and local authorities can sign the Armed Forces Covenant and make their own promise to support the Forces in ways of their choosing.
3. Below is a table of the winners:

Employer	Sector	Region
AECOM	Professional, scientific and technical activities	National
Atos UK Ltd	Information and communication	National
Bank of America Merrill Lynch	Financial and insurance activities	National
Boeing Defence UK Ltd	Manufacturing	National
Bureau Veritas	Other service activities	West Midlands
DJ Rees Decorating Services Limited	Construction	Wales
Doncaster Council	Local Authority	Yorkshire & the Humber
Dundee City Council	Local Authority	Scotland (Highlands)
Hampshire County Council	Local Authority	South East
HSBC	Financial and insurance activities	National
Kier Group	Construction	National
KPMG	Financial and insurance activities	Greater London
Nationwide Building Society	Financial and insurance activities	National
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Human health and social work activities	East Midlands
Pertemps	Administrative and support service activities	National
QinetiQ	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	South East
RBS Plc	Financial and insurance activities	National

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Scottish Ambulance Service	Human health and social work activities	Scotland (Lowlands)
Surrey County Council	Local Authority	South East
TA Plastic Supplies Ltd	Manufacturing	North of England
United Utilities	Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	National
Waves Training Solutions Ltd	Education	Wessex

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